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Handwritten: Memorandum

Chief, Contact Division, OO

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Chief, Foreign Documents Division, OO

Briefing for Contact Division Field Offices on Russian Translation Situation

1. Subsequent to the Russian launching of their first satellite, considerable confusion has arisen from the vituperation in US press and radio against an alleged lethargy in government in keeping abreast of Russian developments as reported in their scientific and technical literature. Groundless accusations have been published such as: "Government Makes Little Effort to Translate Russian Journals," "Government Has No Coordination of Translation Work and Seven Agencies Have Translated the Same Article from an Open Soviet Publication and Classified the Translations 'Secret,'" etc.

2. Actually, as you probably know, FDD has coordinated government translation efforts since 1949 and reported the results in its Consolidated Translation Survey. The volume of translations accomplished during this period has been substantial, and FDD alone has translated over 29,000 pages per year from the scientific literature.

3. Perhaps the bitterest resentment is directed toward what is believed to be government hoarding of translations or preventing dissemination of this work to the public. FDD has been keenly aware of the desirability of providing US science and industry with the benefit of this effort but there was no way in good security practice, no money in the budget and no authorization for direct dissemination of the unclassified translations (90% of the total). Copies have been furnished to the Library of Congress regularly but without attribution to CIA, so that while the Library maintained its Scientific Translation Center copies were actually made available to the public. When the Translation Center was moved to the John Crerar Library in Chicago, FDD continued to provide copies of the unclassified work (omitted of CIA attribution) to the National Science Foundation for transmission to Crerar where they are available to the public. This practice has been maintained without a gap.

SUBJECT: Briefing for Systems Division Field Offices on Russian Translation Situation

4. The Director has told Congress of these facts so as to correct the falsities which have been reported in the press and has gone one step further in authorizing the issuance of the following FBI reports in CIA cover, unclassified:

- Scientific Information Report
- Soviet Nucleonics Information Report
- Activities in the Arctic and Antarctic
- Consolidated Translation Survey
- Report on USSR Production of Industrial Equipment
- Transportation, Communication and Electric Power in the USSR
- Data on USSR Extractive Industries

With all this effort there is still no central point in government to which industry and scientists can go to get all unclassified government translations of interest to them. A good deal of activity is being to remedy the problem but nothing concrete has been decided at this time. Office of Technical Services, Department of Commerce has the legal responsibility, but is meeting firm opposition on the budget to set up the facility. A bill is before Congress to establish the service in the Library of Congress but this has not been before committee as yet.

5. In the meantime, you may be faced with many inquiries on how individuals can get copies of translations. The safest answer at this time is that they may be had from Great Library. Great publishes a journal called Translation Monthly which lists translations available including all of our work.

6. We will keep you informed on any new developments.

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